CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 23 March 1995, at 10.35 a.m.

President: Mrs. Hisami Kurokochi (Japan)

GE.95-61012 (E)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 703rd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. I apologize for the delay in opening this plenary due to consultations going on for some time.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of the United States of America, Sri Lanka, Ireland and Canada. I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Ledogar.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): Madam President, may I first of all express my appreciation to you for the deft and distinguished manner in which you have conducted your presidency, in spite of the fact that this is your first month as your country's representative to the Conference on Disarmament. Since this is also the first time I have addressed the Conference this session, I take the opportunity formally to welcome you and our other new colleagues who have arrived this year.

In a few short weeks, the States parties to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, the NPT, will meet in New York to decide the future of that treaty. This is demonstrably the most significant arms control decision to confront the international community for some time. For its part, the United States Government, from the very top on down, has assigned the highest priority to the indefinite extension of the NPT. As President Clinton noted in a speech he gave on 1 March - a speech which I have asked to be circulated as a CD document - "nothing is more important to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons than extending the treaty indefinitely and unconditionally". Failure to do so, he warned, "could open the door to a world of nuclear trouble". He emphasized that "the NPT is the principal reason why scores of nations do not now possess nuclear weapons; why the doomsayers were wrong".

The United States Senate, in its 16 March "sense-of-the-Senate" resolution in support of indefinite extension of the NPT, was equally unequivocal in saying that "parties opposing indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT are acting against their own interest, the interest of the United States and the interest of all the peoples of the world by placing the nuclear non-proliferation regime and global security at risk".

As we make our preparations for the NPT review and extension Conference, United States officials have spared no effort in building the case for indefinite extension. Of major importance in this regard are the various indications of the successful operation of the treaty in all its aspects, from providing a framework for the safe and peaceful uses of nuclear energy to the stemming of nuclear weapons proliferation. Although there are many concrete examples to be cited across the broad spectrum of the Treaty's provisions, today I would like to focus specifically on the implementation of its article VI.

A large body of evidence demonstrates unequivocally that the United States and Russia have worked both ceaselessly and successfully over the last 25 years to meet their obligations under article VI of the treaty to end the arms race and to seek general nuclear disarmament. The list of achievements is long and impressive. In recent years alone, both countries

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have eliminated over 2,500 nuclear-capable intermediate-range missiles and have taken an entire class of weapon systems out of their inventories; they have decided unilaterally to withdraw and dismantle thousands more tactical nuclear arms; and they have begun under the START Treaties to remove more than 17,000 nuclear weapons from strategic missiles and bombers. These efforts bear evidence to the seriousness with which the United States views its obligations under article VI of the Treaty. The arms race is a thing of the past. Now the race is on to bring down nuclear force levels as quickly, safely, and securely as possible.

Many steps have been taken to do this. At the Washington summit last fall, Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin agreed to step up the pace of START I's entry into force and, once START II is ratified, to deactivate all strategic nuclear delivery systems that are scheduled to be reduced under the START Treaties. They instructed their experts to look for ways to adapt to the changed international security situation, to include the possibility, after START II ratification, of yet further reductions of strategic nuclear forces. Other steps taken by the Russian Federation and the United States include cooperation to prevent nuclear smuggling and strengthen controls over nuclear materials, and to improve rapidly the safety and transparency as well as to ensure the irreversibility of nuclear weapons reductions.

Since 1988, the United States has reduced its total active nuclear stockpile by 59 per cent, its strategic nuclear warheads by 47 per cent, and its non-strategic nuclear force warheads by a remarkable 90 per cent. The United States is working to dismantle up to 2,000 nuclear warheads a year, the highest rate that our technical limitations will permit. In addition, as announced by President Clinton on 1 March, the United States is permanently withdrawing 200 metric tons of fissile material, both highly enriched uranium and plutonium, from its nuclear stockpile. This figure represents a very significant portion of all the fissile material that was produced for that stockpile.

Together with other members of the international community, the United States has taken enormous strides toward disarmament as evidenced by our collective efforts to control missile technology and conventional arms, and by our common progress toward the complete elimination of biological and chemical weapons. As President Clinton affirmed recently in his joint communique with Indian Prime Minister Rao, we envision, ultimately, a world free of nuclear arms. Making the NPT permanent will be a giant step in the direction of general nuclear disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament is working hard to achieve another important goal with respect to nuclear arms control and non-proliferation - the conclusion of a treaty banning nuclear testing. At the outset of this part of our CD session, Ambassador Ralph Earle, Deputy Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, reiterated the commitment of the United States to achieving a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty at the earliest possible date. He informed the CD of three decisions made by President Clinton: on extending the United States testing moratorium, on asking the CD to remain in session to negotiate a CTBT, and on dropping the

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United States' 10-year special withdrawal provision. These moves were designed both to underscore the United States commitment to negotiations in Geneva and to provide an impetus to those negotiations. More recently, President Clinton, in his 1 March speech, again stressed the importance of an early conclusion to our CTBT negotiations, saying that "to stop the development of new generations of nuclear weapons, we must also quickly complete negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty".

For our part, the United States has been generally satisfied with the pace of some of the work conducted during the current part of the session - by experts and in drafting groups. The United States would have liked, however, to have seen more overall progress achieved at this point, in keeping with the President's injunction to achieve a treaty at the earliest possible time. Nevertheless, we look forward to a revised rolling text that will emerge shortly after the end of this part of the CD session. We expect that the text will be more concise, with the main issues for resolution set out in clearer terms in order to facilitate decision-making during the inter-sessional period in capitals and here in Geneva when the CD session resumes. To expedite progress and demonstrate resolve, it is still my hope that the United States proposal to return to Geneva for inter-sessional work will be supported, if not in May after the NPT review and extension Conference, then in July between parts II and III. The CTBT negotiating path has been bumpy, but the CD has been moving steadily along. Important decisions have been made on key treaty elements, the rolling text has evolved and, in my judgement, progress towards a CTB at this point is well advanced and irreversible.

Turning to yet another facet of the nuclear dimension, security assurances, there is also progress to report. For many years, numerous States parties to the NPT have expressed concern that appropriate measures be undertaken to ensure and safeguard their security. To that end, the United States offered positive security assurances in 1968 and then followed up, in 1978, with so-called negative security assurances - i.e., assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use of nuclear weapons. On the eve of the NPT review and extension Conference, the United States is reviewing its policies on security assurances, and has sought, in conjunction with its fellow nuclear Powers, to determine what further appropriate measures might be undertaken. The United States continues to believe that it is possible to strengthen and expand the positive assurances offered in United Nations Security Council resolution 255. The United States also sees merit in harmonizing, among the nuclear Powers, the language contained in their negative security assurances. My Government plans to report soon on the outcome of our own internal review and expects positive results emerging from P-5 discussions.

There is another important area related to nuclear arms control and non-proliferation in which my country has been working to achieve progress. In a speech before the United Nations General Assembly in 1993, President Clinton called for a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes as a goal that would contribute to the larger objective of combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, a cut-off treaty continues to be a very high priority

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of the Clinton Administration. The treaty we seek would be global, non-discriminatory, and effectively verifiable. It would cap the amount of material available for nuclear weapons, and its verification measures would extend international safeguards to new facilities. The United States believes that a cut-off treaty is possible in the relatively short term. My delegation hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will today be able to reach agreement to establish a committee to negotiate a cut-off treaty on the simple basis of the consensus achieved during the 1993 United Nations General Assembly.

Since the first day of this 1995 CD session, the United States has supported the re-establishment of the same four ad hoc committees that the CD had in 1993 and 1994. The United States regrets that this body has not been able to follow the precedent of previous years. We regret even more that a few among us do not really agree with the overwhelming view that the CD must tackle important issues related to conventional disarmament. As a result, this body seems to be sending a message to the world community that it is uninterested in devoting any attention to the conventional field. We seem to be saying that the CD could not care less about the fact that since World War II, hundreds of thousands if not millions of lives have been lost due to conventional weapons, not nuclear weapons, and this regrettable and massive carnage continues today, worldwide, as we sit here in this stately, peaceful chamber. Not only should the CD agree to the prompt establishment, of an ad hoc committee on cut-off of production of fissile material, it should also agree to the rapid re-establishment of the same ad hoc committees it had last year, most importantly the Committee on Transparency in Armaments. It is discouraging, Madam President, that despite your own highly professional best efforts, and those of Ambassador Vattani before you, the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to establish any of the other ad hoc committees that existed last year, with the sole exception of the NTB Ad Hoc Committee. Moreover, we have not been able even to appoint special coordinators for the issues to be handled by these committees, nor even coordinators for the separate issues of membership expansion, the CD's agenda and improved and effective functioning.

On membership expansion, I would like to reaffirm the openness of the United States to any proposal to bring the size of the CD more in line with recent changes in the world community. Last fall, the United States was pleased to join consensus on the United Nations General Assembly resolution on membership expansion which, inter alia, advocated a significant expansion of the CD to at least 60 countries. Further, the United States stands by its proposal of last year that all 23 States identified by Ambassador O'Sullivan in his report to the CD be immediately admitted as members, with the proviso that no members of the CD who now or in the future should be subject to comprehensive enforcement measures under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter would be able to participate in CD decisions by denying consensus. We urge continued consideration of this proposal. We also hope the CD can soon appoint a special coordinator for membership expansion who can find a solution which satisfies the long-standing and well-justified call to expand the Conference's membership.

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I would like to make a quick observation about the Slovak Republic's application to the CD. Like my colleagues in the Western Group and the members of the Eastern Group, the United States supports the quick and speedy acceptance of Slovakia into this CD body. I urge the Conference to find a solution to this question as soon as possible. I also urge my colleagues in the Group of 21 to take a definitive position on this matter. It has been on the table for some time and deserves a timely answer.

In closing, while it is an encouraging fact that the end of the cold war has set the scene for the CD to make major progress across the entire arms control and disarmament spectrum, it is a lamentable fact that a number of this body's members have been palpably unwilling to focus on all those arms control and disarmament issues that really matter in the post-cold-war world. Although we are indeed making useful progress on one important treaty, our true potential is being diminished by procedural paralysis. Collectively we should not tolerate this state of affairs. I and my delegation pledge to do all we can to see that the Conference on Disarmament reaches its full potential.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of the United States of America for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Sri Lanka, Ambassador Goonetilleke.

Mr. GOONETILLEKE (Sri Lanka): Madam President, it is indeed a great honour for me to welcome you and to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. As representative of a country which has traditionally upheld equality between men and women, I am particularly pleased to see you presiding over this Conference.

Permit me to extend my delegation's sincere good wishes to Mr. Vladimir F. Petrovsky, Secretary-General of the Conference, and his deputy Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail, for their continuing contributions to the work of the CD. Let me also express my delegation's appreciation of, and thanks to, your distinguished predecessors, Ambassador Vattani and Ambassador Nasseri, for their stewardship of the CD during its critical months. My delegation's special thanks are due to Ambassador Miguel Marín Bosch, Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffmann and his "tigers" led by Dr. Peter Marshall, and Ambassador Dembinski for their collective labour of love that brought forth a text of a draft CTBT. And let me congratulate Ambassador Dembinski, Ambassador Lars Norberg and Ambassador Jaap Ramaker who have "inherited" from their distinguished predecessors the CTBT treaty-making process, as chairmen of the NPT Ad Hoc Committee and its two vital working groups. Let me welcome to Geneva and into our fold new colleagues - Ambassador U Aye of Myanmar, Ambassador Bendjelloun-Touimi of the Kingdom of Morocco and Ambassador Sha Zukang of the People's Republic of China - and wish them every success. In so doing, let me not forget, but remember with gratitude, their distinguished predecessors, Ambassador Tin Kyaw Hlaing, Ambassador El Ghali Benhima and Ambassador Hou Zhitong, and, Madam President,

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your own distinguished predecessor Ambassador Yoshitomo Tanaka, for their outstanding contributions to the Conference on Disarmament, and wish them every success in their new assignments.

It is my intention to limit my statement to two broad but interrelated subjects, namely, nuclear disarmament and security assurances. Of late, the CD has heard statements exhorting the importance of establishing an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament. Although this subject has been on our agenda for many years, the CD has not been able to deal with it for a variety of reasons. On the other hand, the Conference had dealt with the subject of negative security assurances (NSA) within the confines of an ad hoc committee for a considerable period of time. Regrettably, the state which the CD is presently in prevents it from dealing with either of these important subjects. However, that predicament should not detract us from discussing these two important subjects.

I am fully aware of the positions taken by various delegations in regard to nuclear disarmament. While some have taken the position that the agenda of the CD is replete with matters relating to nuclear issues, others have expressed the view that conventional weapons are more insidious than nuclear weapons, citing the number of wars fought since World War II using conventional weapons, and the death toll of such wars. Some others go to the extent of comparing land-mines with nuclear weapons with the intention of establishing that in real life the former is more dangerous than the latter. Despite these attempts to conceal the true nature of nuclear weapons, all of us are painfully aware what nuclear weapons, once unleashed, are capable of doing to this planet and to its inhabitants. No threat of such extinction is posed by any one of the conventional weapons. More importantly, the international community has been able to outlaw other weapons of mass destruction such as bacteriological and chemical weapons. The only weapon of mass destruction which still threatens mankind is the nuclear weapon.

The year 1995 is depicted by many as an important milestone in our march towards international peace, security and disarmament. For some it signifies the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II. For others, it signifies the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. For some others, it is important for an entirely different reason, namely, it is the fiftieth anniversary of the first use of atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. For the victors, the atomic bomb was a convenient instrument that brought World War II to a speedy end. For the vanquished, however, it was a weapon of mass destruction unprecedented in the history of mankind. For all of us, who recall this horrendous happening 50 years later, it is an inhumane act that should never have been allowed to happen or be repeated.

History apart, the importance of 1995, particularly to those who deal with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, cannot be overemphasized. The historic review and extension Conference of the NPT, which will determine the future of the treaty, will be held in New York in a few weeks' time. Negotiation of a CTBT, which is another pillar of nuclear disarmament, has entered a crucial phase this year. The positive outcome of these two events are quite sufficient to make the year 1995 a memorable one for the entire

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international community. The work we do, and the decisions we take this year, will undoubtedly have an indelible and far-reaching impact on the history of mankind.

The transformation the world has undergone since the height of the cold war is undeniably considerable. The NPT was negotiated when the super-Power rivalry and the suspicion between the East and the West were at their peak. The confrontation between these two blocs very nearly dragged the entire world into an uncertain fate. The situation that existed at that time led to increasing reliance on and the growth of nuclear-weapons stockpiles which eventually threatened our very existence. The conclusion of the INF, START I and START II treaties contributed immensely to change this bleak situation and reverse the nuclear arms race. This situation underwent further changes in the early 1990s to the extent that confrontation between the two rival blocs has been replaced by an unparalleled cooperation. It was as if an unseen hand was guiding humankind away from a certain catastrophe to a new future which is full of hope. As we enter the twenty-first century, we should discard the extant relics of confrontation. The last remaining weapon of mass destruction in the hands of a few countries should not threaten the future generations who will be the inheritors of the Earth. As we move on to the twenty-first century, we must muster courage to discard old doctrines to suit the changing security environment and international relations.

To understand and appreciate the subject that we are discussing, it is necessary for us to briefly survey the topography of the world in so far as it relates to international security. At the time when the NPT was negotiated, there were five declared nuclear-weapon States. Despite our good intentions, the nuclear juggernaut kept on moving steadily growing in size and ferocity and vertical proliferation continued unabatedly. Meanwhile horizontal proliferation, too, when on unchecked. Horizontal proliferation is very likely to continue as long as the declared nuclear-weapon States continue to proffer the doctrine of deterrence and hold on to their unique status. So long as this situation is continued, the non-declared, nuclear-weapon-capable States are likely to continue with their programmes, while other interested States, too, may begin to realize that their national interests and security could be safeguarded only when they, too, possess the nuclear-weapon capability. For most of these States, crossing the threshold means taking the political decision.

Members of the CD have a pretty good idea of the nuclear doctrines followed by the Western and the Soviet blocs during the height of the cold war. NATO, which consists of three of the five declared nuclear-weapon States, was never supportive of a non-first-use principle. Ironically, even now when the security climate in the world has undergone profound changes, these countries continue to cling on to the same old doctrines. Then, it was to deter a massive conventional attack by the Soviet Union on Western Europe. Now, it is entirely for a different purpose, and we shall come to that issue later.

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Times have changed, so has the thinking of the Russian Federation. The former Soviet Union had earlier subscribed to the principle of non-first-use. But now, the Russian Federation maintains that it is not bound by the undertaking given by the former Soviet Union. Moscow now subscribes to the policy of NATO in regard to non-first-use. This leaves only one nuclear-weapon State, namely China, which still supports the principle of non-first-use. China goes a step further and maintains that it will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States, particularly those who are States parties to the NPT. Although this offer of unilateral guarantees is a refreshing change from the prevailing situation, it provides little or no reassurance to us, for the other nuclear-weapon States do not subscribe to the Chinese position.

A majority of us expected significant changes in the doctrines of the nuclear-weapon States, when the cold war eventually began to recede. For example, we thought that something positive would emerge when the United States of America decided to conduct a nuclear posture review in October 1993. The outcome of that review, which was released in September 1994, was that the United States of America should continue its nuclear doctrine without a change. This time, however, not to meet a potential threat from its traditional enemy. The decision was that the United States of America should be ready to use nuclear weapons as a last resort in certain circumstances. If the remaining huge arsenal of nuclear weapons is not intended to deter the traditional enemies who are no longer adversaries, the question that invariably arises is against whom these nuclear weapons are meant to be used. In this context of crucial importance, another issue that surfaces is the plan to develop "micro" and "mini" nukes with yields as low as 10-100 tons with the reported intention of targeting third world countries or for battleground use in regional wars. In view of the fact that of the 175 States parties to the NPT, 170 belong to the "have-nots" club, the new development certainly does not inspire confidence in those countries.

On the subject of elimination of nuclear weapons we are heartened to note that two leading nuclear-weapon States, namely the United States of America and the Russian Federation, had some time ago expressed favourable views on the issue. However, the views expressed by the two Presidents have not been followed up. Consequently, no firm policy statements have emanated from these two nuclear-weapon States that they indeed are serious in seeing the world devoid of nuclear weapons. My delegation would, therefore, welcome a firm policy statement from these two nuclear-weapon States in regard to this crucial subject. Instead of firm commitment on the part of nuclear-weapon States, what we have witnessed is the continuation of old practices and doctrines. Meanwhile, work on the development of exotic nuclear weapons continues. It seems to us that the position of the nuclear Powers is that nuclear weapons are good for us, but bad for others. Nuclear weapons are essential for our national security but others should not dare acquire them for that or any other purpose. The world which is already polarized into nuclear "haves" and "have-nots" is divided once again into responsible States that could own and possess nuclear weapons, and others that cannot be trusted with such weapons.

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It is against this background we have to look at the important question of security assurances. This certainly is not a new subject. For example, when the NPT was on the drafting board, a set of rights and obligations was envisaged for the nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. While the latter acknowledged the right of the former to possess nuclear weapons, they were also required to accept certain responsibilities such as those contained in articles IV and VI of the treaty. While the non-nuclear-weapon States acquiesced in the situation which allowed the permanent Five to possess nuclear weapons, there was a stipulation that the former will be provided with access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Besides this quid pro quo, the permanent Five were required to give positive security assurances which we find in Security Council resolution 255 (1968). However, the weakness inherent in that resolution, particularly in its operative paragraph 2, compelled the non-nuclear-weapon States to demand firm negative security assurances. In the recent past, non-nuclear-weapon States have made it clear that nothing less than a multilaterally negotiated, legally binding international instrument based on a common formula would eventually satisfy their security concerns.

Thus, we now find ourselves in a predicament which has no parallel. One hundred and seventy non-nuclear-weapon States have become parties to the NPT on the understanding that they, along with the five nuclear-weapon States, are on a journey that will culminate with nuclear disarmament and eventual elimination of this last category of weapon of mass destruction from the arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States. Twenty-five years later, however, we realize that one side has done precious little to keep its side of treaty obligations. Yet we are told by the nuclear-weapon States that the treaty must extend unconditionally and indefinitely. Legal arguments are put forward to convince the States parties that indefinite extension is the only viable option available. Meanwhile, attempts are being made to decided first on the extension issue, and after that, engage in the exercise of reviewing the treaty. To make matters worse, some nuclear-weapon States are trying to get the treaty extended by a simple majority, which is legally feasible, but morally questionable. While all these developments are taking place, nothing worth mentioning has been said by the nuclear-weapon States of their obligations, particularly in keeping with those in articles IV and VI of the treaty.

Both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States are fully aware of the importance of the NPT. They share the view that the longevity of the treaty is essential for international peace and security. Therefore, the logical thing to do is to extend the treaty in keeping with the wish of the States parties to the treaty. While this being the case, the lack of interest on the part of nuclear-weapon States on other aspects of the treaty makes the non-nuclear-weapon States believe that the former are only keen on extending the treaty without fulfilling their obligations. Hence the reference to article VI of the treaty by these countries.

We agree that security assurances are not an integral part of the NPT. However, one must agree that there is an interrelationship between the treaty and security assurances. That was how Security Council resolution 255 (1968)

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came into existence. If 1968 was a good year to grant security assurances, 1995 becomes an equally important year to provide additional security assurances beyond what is contained in Security Council resolution 255 (1968).

In this chamber, we often hear the positions of some nuclear-weapon States on the issue of security assurances. These positions in simple language would amount to saying: "We have given you security assurances. They are contained in Security Council resolution 255 (1968). This being the case, why do the non-nuclear-weapon States need any further assurances?" If the positive assurances given 25 years ago did go far enough to meet our concerns, then there is no reason for the non-nuclear-weapon States to repeatedly renew their demand. This is why Sri Lanka, along with a host of other non-aligned countries, insisted that the CD should continue its work on negative security assurances. It must be made clear that the security assurances given by some nuclear-weapon States to Ukraine and to those who are parties to the Tlatelolco Treaty have not gone unnoticed. The nuclear-weapon States should, and must, not be selective in granting security assurances.

Besides China's consistent and principled position on non-first-use and negative security assurances, which reassures us all, we are also heartened by the positive attitude taken by the Russian Federation, contained in their statement of 23 February concerning both positive and negative security assurances. The willingness of the Russian Federation to improve on Security Council resolution 255 (1968) and to undertake drawing up of an international convention on negative security assurances is indeed laudable. In this crucial year, we naturally look forward to similar commitments by other nuclear-weapon States.

Although the CD is placed in an unique position to realize our objective, the results we have so far achieved in this regard leave much to be desired. The most we have achieved in the CD remains confined to pious reiterations of the scope and nature of the assurances given in 1968. Apart from these oft repeated positions, the CD was unable to make any appreciable progress on negative security assurances in 1994. The current impasse in the CD is such that, despite the fact we have almost completed the first part of the 1995 session, we have not even been able to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on NSA this year. Our attitude towards security assurances should undergo a fundamental change, may I say, a complete change of heart. We should take immediate steps to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on NSA and commence our work without any further delay.

In this context, we attach importance to document CD/1277 submitted by some members of the Group of 21, including my own, last year on NSA. That document detailed the view of the non-aligned countries that form the bulk of States parties to the NPT. Those countries have urged the CD to negotiate, as a matter of priority, an international convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances and to undertake negotiations for the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework. Consequently, the authors of CD/1277 clearly stated that the only completely effective security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear

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weapons lie in the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it recognized the fact that the very existence of nuclear weapons is in itself a threat to international security and a factor that encouraged proliferation. Those nuclear-weapon States that support "counter-proliferation" measures ought to bear this in their minds.

Annexed to CD/1277 was a draft "Protocol on security assurances". In this regard, I wish to say that we are not inextricably committed to a protocol that should be attached to the treaty. It could take any form so long as it addresses our basic concerns, substantively and definitively. Such an international instrument may take some time to be completed. While that is under consideration, certainly the Security Council could seriously address the question of expanding the scope of its resolution 255 (1968), as has been suggested by the delegation of the Russian Federation. Let us all face the challenges fairly and squarely in the coming months. In this regard my delegation is pleased to hear the statement made by Ambassador Ledogar this morning in which he detailed the work his delegation proposes to undertake in respect of both negative and positive security assurances. It is the hope of my delegation that such work would produce results that will take care of the concerns of the non-nuclear-weapon States.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Sri Lanka for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ireland, Ambassador Swift.

Mr. SWIFT (Ireland): Madam President, let me begin by congratulating you on taking the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament in recent weeks. We have seen the work of the Conference advance under your presidency and we are confident that this progress will continue in the time remaining to you. Let me also pay my respects to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Petrovsky, to his deputy, Mr. Bensmail, and to all their staff, whose work and dedication we appreciate daily.

We are fast approaching the beginning of the 1995 review and extension Conference of the non-proliferation Treaty. This is a twofold event: the Conference will review the Treaty and take a decision on its extension. We attach great importance to both of these aspects.

The NPT may not be a perfect treaty: in many ways it reflects the particular atmosphere of the late 1960s. Yet, in our view, it has served the international community well. When Ireland, along with other countries, promoted the non-proliferation idea in the 1950s and 1960s, our aim was to prevent the spread of a class of weapons of horrific destructive power and to obtain a clear recognition of the value of nuclear disarmament. The Treaty also addressed other important aspects of the nuclear issue such as an acknowledgement of the right of all States to the peaceful use of nuclear technology and the outline of a safeguards system to help ensure the Treaty's implementation.

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The Treaty now has more than 170 adherents, including over the last few years the two remaining nuclear Powers, a former nuclear-weapon State and some former so-called threshold States. It would be an extraordinary aberration of history if all of us who adhere to the Treaty, with our wide variety of backgrounds from all parts of the world, were mistaken in our assessment of its value.

Yet over the years some aspects of the Treaty have given rise to criticism. It is sometimes regarded as discriminatory in its distinction between the nuclear and non-nuclear States; others, however, see this distinction as simply a historical fact having consequences for the obligations imposed by the Treaty. It is often said that it was unable to prevent increases in the number and types of nuclear weapons; however, international developments in recent times have helped to ease this legitimate concern, particularly with the agreements between the United States and Russia; and it is worth bearing in mind that the commitment to nuclear disarmament in article VI is the only legal obligation of its kind, providing a basis for advancing down this road, however slowly. The Treaty is regarded by some as not having done enough to help promote peaceful use of nuclear technology: yet the grounds for cooperation exist in article IV and perhaps the issue is rather how to implement this article satisfactorily. The safeguards system is sometimes seen as inadequate; yet it has been a major factor in dealing with possible violators.

All of these, and other, concerns, have a place in the review of the Treaty and we look forward to a full and open discussion of them. But the review is only one part of the forthcoming Conference. The parties to the Treaty must also decide, 25 years after its entry into force, whether to extend the Treaty indefinitely, as provided for in article X.2. As we already stated at the 1990 review Conference, Ireland believes that the Treaty should be extended indefinitely and unconditionally. We have taken this position because we are convinced that, despite any shortcomings, the value of the NPT for non-proliferation is too important to be called into question. In fact we should perhaps consider for a moment the result of any doubt concerning the continuation of the Treaty. Were such doubts to exist or to arise at certain intervals, it might happen, indeed, it would be almost inevitable, that countries, which might feel vulnerable without the Treaty, could begin to take steps to prepare for the possibility of its non-extension. The unavoidable effect of such steps would be to provoke other countries, who might feel threatened, to do likewise, thus provoking a spiral of moves that could be difficult, if not impossible, to contain. If the extension issue were to be on the agenda continually, it is our view that the delicate structure of the Treaty could not continue to bear such pressure for long.

Ireland's European Union partners are also committed to the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT. All of us, even with differing approaches to nuclear weapons issues, believe that the Treaty is too valuable a part of the international non-proliferation regime to be put into doubt. Since last summer, we have made this view the subject of a joint action in the preparation of the NPT review and extension Conference and we shall continue to foster this conviction in the time remaining.

(Mr. Swift, Ireland)

Despite differing perceptions of the comprehensive test-ban treaty, there has been steady progress in the negotiations over the past year, with a notable quickening of the pace since the beginning of the 1995 CD session. The Treaty is the main issue occupying the Conference at the moment and the opportunity to push ahead rapidly is clearly being seized. All members of the Conference know that Ireland has advocated such a treaty for a long number of years and we have been heartened by the committed work that is now taking place in the Conference. The Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Dembinski, and the two chairmen of the working groups, Ambassadors Norberg and Ramaker, have demonstrated clearly their determination to advance the negotiations speedily and in a thorough manner. We would wish to congratulate them - and indeed all members of the Conference - on the spirit in which the negotiations are proceeding.

Ireland would expect a comprehensive test-ban treaty to be exactly that: an international instrument which would comprehensively ban all nuclear explosions for all times. I do not propose to comment on the details of the negotiations today and should simply like to recall that resolution 49/70 at last year's General Assembly urged the participants at the Conference not just to negotiation but "to conclude" a CTBT: we confidently expect that this sentiment will continue to inspire this work of the Conference.

Negotiations on the cut-off of production of fissile material for weapons purposes have still not properly begun. Resolution 48/75 L clearly lays the ground for such work in calling for negotiation of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty, banning the production of fissile material for weapons purposes, and other nuclear devices, in the most appropriate forum. The Conference took up this call in January 1994 in agreeing to appoint a Special Coordinator, Ambassador Shannon of Canada, to consult on how to get the negotiations going. We have watched over the past year as these efforts have come near to achieving an agreement. Yet, one year later, the final step to consensus still apparently needs to be taken.

The question of whether and how to deal with stockpiles remains a major obstacle. Ireland shares the serious and legitimate concerns of the international community about stockpiles of these materials. We see little advantage, however, in preventing the start of a process which will inevitably, in time, open up for discussion the range of factors surrounding this issue. We can only admire the persistence and dedication with which Ambassador Shannon has pursued, and continues to pursue, his task and the interest which his country has taken in advancing this issue. We hope that his efforts will meet with success in the very near future.

While CTBT and cut-off are important issues for progress in disarmament, we consider that the Conference cannot continue to devote itself exclusively to nuclear issues. It is a fact that the wars of the past 50 years have been fought mainly with conventional weapons and the loss of lives in these wars is generally due to conventional weapons. There have been huge and destabilizing build-ups of arms in various parts of the world, often at the expense of economic and social development.

(Mr. Swift, Ireland)

While the legitimate security needs of any State must be covered, we feel that it is high time to try to develop some principles, of a voluntary and political nature, on how restraint and responsibility can be exercised in the acquisition and supply of conventional arms. This is the basic notion underlying the Irish proposal for a code of conduct on conventional arms transfers. The idea is not ours alone and the Conference already has a proposal along similar lines from Romania since last year's session. Indeed, as last year's discussion in the Conference showed, a number of countries are sympathetic to the idea of developing a code, or some principles, which would be applied to conventional arms transfers.

Over the past year we have worked with our European Union partners to try to advance this idea and together, along with some other countries, we presented a procedural proposal to last year's General Assembly. Despite the hesitations about the draft resolution, we believe that work on this topic should continue. We are confident that ways can be found to carry it forward.

The question of expansion of the membership of the Conference has been given added impetus and urgency by the consensus resolution 49/77 B at last year's General Assembly. That resolution recognized the legitimate aspirations of candidate countries to participate fully in the work of the Conference, recalled that a dynamic solution to the question of membership had been recommended in August 1993 and urged the Conference to bring about a significant expansion in its composition to at least 60 countries. We deeply regret that no action has yet been taken in the direction of this resolution. Despite the helpful efforts of the President of the Conference in January and February - and we understand that those efforts are continuing - there is no concrete indication that the Conference as a whole is moving towards an expansion of its membership.

I should perhaps make clear straight away that we see the question of the admission of Slovakia quite differently. In our view, Slovakia was the agreed State to take over the former Czechoslovak seat and it is difficult for us to understand why this case has been linked to the overall expansion issue. We hope that the Conference will re-examine the case again soon in a way which will permit Slovakia to sit at the table as a full member.

Ireland first requested membership of the Conference as far back as 1982 and we have reaffirmed that request consistently and at periodic intervals since then. The basis of our request was our wish to participate fully in the negotiation of international disarmament instruments to which we would subsequently be expected to adhere. That conviction has been strengthened as the pace of different negotiations has intensified and as the instruments in question have financial implications. It seems to us to be at least open to debate whether a particular group of countries should be established permanently in a position where they negotiate international disarmament instruments for the world community as a whole.

This issue could be solved overnight by the Conference agreeing to admit all candidates which request membership and we see a particular advantage in this solution: it would dispense with any selective process. One objection

(Mr. Swift, Ireland)

to this solution which is often voiced is that there has to be a so-called "balance of views" in the Conference. We wonder about the validity of this line of argument, however, in a situation where the Conference operates by consensus. As the Conference knows only too well, in a consensus situation, it is open to any one member, of whatever view, to insist on their individual position being taken into account. The question of balance of views does not seem to be a significant factor in these circumstances. The real issue, it seems to us, is the need to accommodate countries who wish, and perhaps see it as their right, to participate fully in the negotiation of international disarmament instruments having worldwide applicability.

In conclusion Madam President, may I offer you our continuing good wishes for the rest of your term as President of the Conference and assure you and all the members that we are ever ready to cooperate with you in whatever way we can?

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Ireland for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Canada, Ambassador Shannon, who will present a report on the consultations he was mandated to undertake on the most appropriate arrangement to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Mr. SHANNON (Canada): Madam President, may I first offer you my congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference, and for your firm but positive management of it?

Last Friday I circulated a report which I am about to read to all member delegations of the Conference on Disarmament with a view to seeking consensus support for it. The report is on the outcome of my consultations on the most appropriate arrangement to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. I would ask that you put this report to the plenary and seek the concurrence of delegations to the mandate contained in it. I would also ask that the report be made an official document of the Conference. The report reads as follows.

I take the floor to report to you on the progress of my consultations on the most appropriate arrangement to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

At the beginning of last year's session, I was tasked with seeking the views of members on the most appropriate arrangement to negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

As you know, I held numerous consultations, both bilaterally and with groups and reported formally to this plenary on five occasions in 1994. Midway through the last session, consensus was reached that the CD was the appropriate forum to negotiate a treaty on this issue. At the end of the

(Mr. Shannon, Canada)

session in September, while there was no agreement on a mandate for an ad hoc committee, there was agreement, in principle, that an ad hoc committee be established on this issue as soon as a mandate had been agreed. At that time, the CD asked me to continue consultations on an appropriate mandate for an ad hoc committee in order to enable the convening of this ad hoc committee as soon as possible.

At the beginning of this year's session, the Conference decided to continue consultations on a mandate. I have since held numerous consultations, and am pleased to report that delegations have agreed that the mandate for such a committee should be based on resolution 48/75 L of the United Nations General Assembly, and reads as follows:

1. The Conference on Disarmament decides to establish an ad hoc committee on a "ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices".

2. The Conference directs the Ad Hoc Committee to negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

3. The Ad Hoc Committee will report to the Conference on Disarmament on the progress of its work before the conclusion of the 1995 session.

During the course of my consultations, many delegations expressed concerns about a variety of issues relating to fissile material, including the appropriate scope of the convention. Some delegations expressed the view that this mandate would permit consideration in the committee only of the future production of fissile material. Other delegations were of the view that the mandate would permit consideration not only of future but also of past production. Still others were of the view that consideration should not only relate to production of fissile material (past or future) but also to other issues, such as the management of such material.

It has been agreed by delegations that the mandate for the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee does not preclude any delegation from raising for consideration in the Ad Hoc Committee any of the above-noted issues. Delegations with strong views were able to join consensus so we could all move forward on this issue. This means that an ad hoc committee on cut-off can be established and negotiations can begin on this important topic. This has for some time been the common objective of all delegations of this Conference.

I have appreciated the productive contribution and support of all delegations in arriving at this result.

This was the report that I circulated last week and that I now seek consensus on. I hope it meets with the concurrence of all delegations.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Shannon for the presentation of his report. I am sure that I speak on behalf of all of us when I express our deep gratitude to Ambassador Shannon for his unrelenting efforts in seeking agreement on a mandate for an ad hoc committee on "cut-off".

May I take it, then, that the Conference can adopt the report we have just received from Ambassador Shannon, the Special Coordinator on the issue of a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices? I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I understand that now the distinguished representative of India, Ambassador Chandra, wishes to take the floor.

Mr. CHANDRA (India): Madam President, since this is the first time I take the floor under your presidency, I would, at the outset, like to congratulate you on the assumption of the presidency. I pledge the support of my delegation for success in all your endeavours. I would also like to avail of this opportunity to thank your predecessor Ambassador Vattani of Italy who carried out his duties in an exemplary manner.

We have listened very carefully to the report of Ambassador Shannon on the issue of "Prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices", also known as the "cut-off" convention. Our deep and abiding commitment to "cut-off" is well known. It is exemplified by the fact that we have since 1982 been tabling a resolution on it in one form or another at the United Nations General Assembly, that former Prime Minister Rajov Gandhi included "cut-off" like the CTBT in the very first stage of his action plan on a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world order which was unveiled at SSOD-III in 1988, and that in 1993 we were the proud co-sponsors along with Canada and other countries of the first ever United Nations General Assembly consensus resolution on the subject viz. resolution 48/75 L. The flexibility of the international community together with its desire for forward movement was responsible for the achievement of this landmark consensus resolution. In recognition of the importance of this resolution and the consensus embodied in it, India withdrew its resolution on nuclear arms freeze in 1993 and did not table it in 1994.

In this context, it is only natural that we welcome the setting up of an ad hoc committee on "cut-off" on the basis of a mandate which had been negotiated by consensus as detailed in the three points in italics in Ambassador Shannon's report. The mandate as spelt out therein is squarely on the basis of the 1993 United Nations General Assembly consensus resolution 48/75 L providing for a ban on production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, the negotiation of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices and the reportage of the Ad Hoc Committee to the CD on the progress of its work before the conclusion of the 1995 session. The mandate is no more and no less than this.

(Mr. Chandra, India)

In conclusion, I would be remiss if I did not thank Ambassador Shannon for the hard work put in by him in developing his report. As a co-sponsor of the resolution on "cut-off" I have some idea of the immense complexity of his task. He has handled it most commendably with his customary energy, verve and enthusiasm.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of India for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I now recognize the distinguished representative of Algeria, Ambassador Meghlaoui.

Mr. MEGHLAOUI (Algeria) (translated from French): Madam President, as I am taking the floor for the first time since your arrival, allow me first of all to welcome you and congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Allow me also to extend a welcome to our other new colleagues.

I would like to congratulate Ambassador Shannon on the laudable efforts he has made to arrive at the result he has just set out for us. In this connection I would like to remind you of the statements made by the Algerian delegation on the question of fissile material produced for military purposes, and particularly the statement made at the last meeting of the previous session of the Conference on Disarmament. Algeria's position was reaffirmed before this assembly by the Algerian Minister for Foreign Affairs on Thursday, 9 February 1995. The Algerian delegation attaches great importance to the question of fissile material produced for military purposes, in so far as it encompasses the dimensions of non-proliferation and disarmament. Our delegation joins the consensus, but would like to express its keen desire to see its concern regarding existing stockpiles - concern shared by many other delegations - taken into account in the negotiations on which the new committee will soon embark. The Algerian delegation will not fail to follow these negotiations closely and will take a stand, next year, on the content of the mandate of this committee in light of its assessment of the results to be achieved in that context.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Algeria for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Pakistan, who has asked for the floor.

Mr. BABAR (Pakistan): I have also asked for the floor today to express my delegation's views on the report presented just now by Ambassador Shannon on his consultations to find a consensus mandate for the ad hoc committee to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

At the outset, let me extend the deep appreciation of my delegation for the manner in which Ambassador Shannon has conducted his negotiations in order to reach a consensus on this important issue. In a spirit of compromise and cooperation, Pakistan has decided to go along with the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee as proposed by Ambassador Shannon taking into account the attendant understandings and agreements. Pakistan particularly notes the agreement reflected in Ambassador Shannon's report that the mandate for the

(Mr. Babar, Pakistan)

establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee does not preclude any delegation from raising the issue of appropriate scope of the treaty during the negotiating process. The Government of Pakistan has consistently underscored the importance of addressing issues related to fissile material in a comprehensive manner and in accordance with the long-standing international consensus on this issue. Only then would our disarmament concerns be genuinely addressed.

Pakistan strongly believes that the other items on the agenda of the CD warrant equally expeditious disposal. We are seriously concerned over the delay in the establishment of other ad hoc committees, particularly on negative security assurances. This, in our view, is an issue of vital importance for non-nuclear-weapon States and its early finalization will constitute a major confidence-building measure. This committee, as well as other ad hoc committees, should be established without further delay. We look forward to effectively and comprehensively addressing all items of the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament during the course of this year.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Pakistan for his statement. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? I now recognize the distinguished representative of Switzerland, Ambassador Moser.

Mr. MOSER (Switzerland) (translated from French): Allow me first of all to congratulate you most warmly, Madam President, on the period of your presidency. You have guided the Conference with talent and skill. The Swiss delegation would like to thank you above all for your tireless efforts to uphold the cause of non-member participating States.

Switzerland has become the 27th State party to the 1993 Convention on chemical weapons. The Federal Council has submitted the instruments of ratification to the United Nations Secretary-General. By ratifying the Convention, Switzerland stresses its commitment to binding rules of public international law in the area of arms control, in keeping with the aim of maintaining and promoting security and peace described among the five foreign policy objectives in the report of the Federal Council on Swiss foreign policy in the 1990s. For Switzerland the Convention on chemical weapons, along with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, is the most important multilateral disarmament treaty from the standpoint of security policy. The Treaty enjoys the full support of the Swiss chemical industry. Switzerland takes this opportunity to congratulate the Conference on Disarmament on the drawing up of this Convention, which is the first complete disarmament treaty accompanied by a verification regime prohibiting an entire category of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. WICKREMASINGHE (Sri Lanka): My delegation asked for the floor in order to place before the Conference its views on the proposed draft mandate for an ad hoc committee to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear devices. Allow me to extend my delegation's thanks to Ambassador Gerald Shannon of Canada, who has emerged with a draft mandate following protracted consultations with some delegations and regional groups.

(Mr. Wickremasinghe, Sri Lanka)

Sri Lanka can agree to the draft mandate on the understanding that any delegation could raise for consideration in the future Ad Hoc Committee any of the issues referred to in paragraph 5 of Ambassador Shannon's report (CD/1299). Let me add in elaboration that so far as Sri Lanka is concerned, my delegation agrees to the draft mandate on the understanding that consideration should not only relate to production of fissile material, both past and future, but also to other related issues such as management of such material. In this regard, my delegation takes special note of paragraph 6 of Ambassador Shannon's progress report presented to the Conference today, which reads: "It has been agreed by delegations that the mandate for the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee does not preclude any delegation from raising for consideration in the Ad Hoc Committee any of the above-noted issues."

May I also invite the attention of the Conference on Disarmament to the need to re-establish as soon as possible, during the CD's current session, other ad hoc committees, particularly that on negative security assurances, to which my delegation attaches the highest importance? We should dispense with making choices at random.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Sri Lanka for his statement. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? I see none.

Now that Ambassador Shannon's report is adopted, may I take it that the Ad Hoc Committee on a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear devices is thereby established? I see no objection. I take it that the Ad Hoc Committee is thereby established. The remaining business is the appointment of its Chairman, and unless there are any proposals from the floor, perhaps further consultations will be needed. I see no one wishing to take the floor at this stage, so I think we are very happy to recognize that now the Ad Hoc Committee on a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear devices is established, and further consultations will be conducted in order to appoint the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The secretariat has, at my request, circulated a timetable of meetings for next week. It was prepared in consultation with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, is merely indicative and subject to change if necessary. On this basis, may I assume that the tentative timetable is acceptable to delegations?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: As this is the last plenary meeting over which I shall preside, allow me to make a few closing remarks.

When I assumed the presidency of the Conference four weeks ago, I said that I hoped to be able to say that I had had a good and productive four weeks when I handed over the presidency to Ambassador Don Nanjira of Kenya. It has been indeed a great honour and privilege for me to preside over this august

(The President)

body. Serious negotiations are under way on a CTBT, as the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, its working groups and their subsidiary groups meet literally every day, allowing us no time to stay idle. With respect to other issues, we have continued serious consultations. Ambassador Shannon's report which we heard today is but one example of how seriously consultations have been conducted here in the CD and have borne fruit.

While I regret to pass many issues still unresolved to Ambassador Nanjira, I hope that the tireless efforts we have made so far will bear fruit under the Kenyan presidency. I am ready to cooperate with the new President in my capacity as the representative of Japan as well as his predecessor.

Now I should like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks and appreciation to the Coordinators of the Groups and China for the kind support and cooperation shown to me during my term of office, as well as to all other delegations. I should, of course, like to thank the secretariat for their valuable assistance, and the interpreters for facilitating our work. Allow me to wish once again the incoming President, Ambassador Don Nanjira of Kenya, every success and assure him that I shall be at his disposal should he require any assistance.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on 30 March 1995 at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.